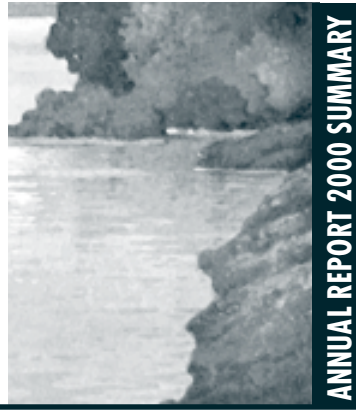


Cleaning up our WATER

• CLEAN WATER PROGRAM •



ANNUAL REPORT 2000 SUMMARY

The Clark County Clean Water Program began in 2000 to enhance existing efforts to protect water resources within the county.

The program was initiated in response to federal and state mandates requiring local government agencies to better control and clean stormwater runoff. This means reducing pollution and its impacts to ensure that Clark County:

- Takes steps to control and reduce pollutants that are discharged from its stormwater sewer system to area streams, rivers, wetlands, lakes, and groundwater
- Coordinates clean water efforts within county departments effectively
- Provides additional opportunities for public involvement and education

The 2001-02 budget for the Clean Water Program (24 months) is approximately \$7.3 million. This additional funding has enabled the county to increase its efforts to regulate and enforce clean water standards, inspect and maintain existing and new stormwater

facilities, monitor and evaluate water quality, build new water quality facilities, and enhance and expand clean water education activities efforts. We'd like to take this opportunity to describe how

the clean water fee is being used to enhance water quality in Clark County.

What's new as a result of the clean water fee?

Now in its second year, the Clark County Clean Water Program has enhanced existing

services and developed new activities to reduce stormwater impacts.

The following is a brief overview of some of the clean water activities that have been implemented to date.

- **Enhanced operation and maintenance of stormwater and pollution control facilities.** Clark County carried out additional inspections and maintenance of stormwater facilities to

What is the Clark County Clean Water Program?

For many people, ensuring that Clark County residents have clean water to drink and use is more than just a legal requirement.

It's a matter of doing the right thing to protect our natural resources for generations to come.

Although the Clean Water Act requires the county to address stormwater pollution, helping keep our water clean is a benefit that our children will enjoy long into the future.

help keep sediment and pollutants from entering the storm sewer system; established a computer-based stormwater facility maintenance tracking and scheduling program; increased the level of street sweeping; and performed annual inspections of private stormwater facilities. Some of the enhanced activities include:

- Mowing 236 county-owned bioswales (low, grassy channels that trap sediment and other pollutants) and 127 county-owned detention and retention ponds increased to four times per year, instead of on an as-requested basis.
- Inspecting and cleaning 5,443 county-owned catch basins (facilities that collect runoff from streets and parking lots, routing the runoff to the larger storm sewer system) increased from once every three years to once annually.
- Inspecting and cleaning 811 county-owned drywells occurs every three to five years. Prior

to the implementation of the clean water fee, there was no regularly scheduled maintenance for drywells.

- Street sweeping 450 miles of county-owned neighborhood roads increased from six to nine times annually. Sweeping on 105 miles of major roadways increased from 10 to 12 times per year.
- **Increased monitoring and evaluation.** County staff are developing a centralized stormwater management data system; mapping public and private stormwater systems; monitoring and evaluating water quality; and reporting on the implementation and effectiveness of the various stormwater management programs and activities. These activities help identify areas in which our clean water programs are successful, and where we may need to take additional steps to ensure that water quality in Clark County continues to improve.
- **Increased opportunities for public involvement and education.** County staff expanded its public involvement and education outreach program involving citizens, businesses, and schools in reducing stormwater-related pollution. Public education and outreach provide the public with the tools they need to take individual positive steps toward improving water quality in our communities. The Clean Water Program provides the resources to continue and enhance existing programs. These programs are described in more detail on the following pages.
- **Completed capital improvement projects.** The Clean Water Program provided resources to

What is the Clean Water Act?

The federal Clean Water Act requires Clark County to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System stormwater permit for our stormwater drainage that discharges into surface water or groundwater. The intent of the permit is to protect groundwater, streams, lakes and other surface waters for beneficial uses such as water supply purposes, recreational uses, fish rearing, and wildlife habitat. The State of Washington Department of Ecology, issues the permit.

Increased monitoring and evaluation help identify areas where our clean water programs are successful, and where we may need to take additional steps to ensure that water quality in Clark County continues to improve.

increase stormwater improvement projects so that additional facilities could be built beyond what the previous budget would allow. These include improvements to stormwater sludge separation facilities, replacing culverts, designing drainage overflow lines, and modifying the Thomas Lake Regional Stormwater Facility for improved water quality treatment and flood control. Over time, these projects



Through the Clean Water Program, Clark County hired additional inspection staff and increased the number of stormwater and erosion control inspections by more than 20 percent.

and other Clean Water Program projects will help to improve water quality in Clark County.

- **Improved enforcement of environmental regulations.** The county revised its stormwater and erosion control regulations to meet state standards, improved measures to control erosion, and increased inspections to ensure compliance with county regulations. Through the Clean Water Program, Clark County hired additional inspection staff and increased the number of stormwater and erosion control inspections by more than 20 percent. In 2000, code enforcement officers performed almost 2,200 inspections.

What is the Clean Water Commission?

The Board of Clark County Commissioners appointed the members of the Clean Water Commission to ensure that the Clean Water Program is responsive and accountable to citizens. The commission's duties include:

- **Representing** a balanced interest in storm and surface water treatment and regulation
- **Making** recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners

on programming, financing, and policies on surface and storm-water issues

- **Reporting** recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for creating an incentive program designed to encourage property owners to take actions that significantly reduce storm-water pollution
- **Providing** quarterly and annual reports to the Board of County Commissioners on the effectiveness of the Clean Water Management Program
- **Promoting** clean water and stormwater program coordination among other agencies, groups, and citizens at large

Members of the Clean Water Commission are Robert Agard, Willie Bourlet, Cal Ek, Dana Kemper, Mary Martin, Susan Rasmussen, Don Steinke, Art Stubbs, and Peter Tuck.

The Clean Water Commission meets the first and third Wednesday of every month from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Clark County Public Works Operations Center, 4700 NE 78th Street, Vancouver. Meetings are open to the public. For up-to-date meeting information, please contact Susan Newman, Environmental Services Division, at (360)397-6118 ext. 4352 or send an e-mail to cleanwater@co.clark.wa.us.

How can I become involved in the Clean Water Program?

As part of the ongoing effort to educate and involve the people of Clark County in clean water activities, we provide the following programs. For more information about these programs, visit our web site at www.co.clark.wa.us.



The Solid Waste and Recycling Division developed “Mother Nature’s Puppet Show,” for elementary school children that describes things people can do to care for their yards without using polluting chemicals.

- **Natural Lawn Care Program.** The goal of this program is to reduce use of toxic yard and garden chemicals that can have a negative effect on our water. As part of this program, the Solid Waste and Recycling Division developed “Mother Nature’s Puppet Show,” an award-winning presentation for elementary school children that describes things people can do to care for their yards without using polluting chemicals. This program has been presented to more the 7,500 children since the clean water fee was implemented.

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Water Conservation Facts & Ideas

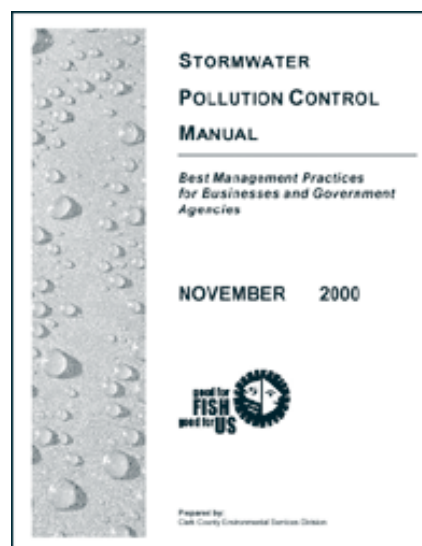
- Water covers 70 percent of the earth's surface. Ninety-seven percent of the world's water is salty and undrinkable. Two percent of the water is polluted, polar ice, or otherwise inaccessible and undrinkable, leaving approximately one percent of the earth's water for humans to use.
- The average U.S. citizen uses 1,668 gallons of water daily.
- Average daily use in other countries:
 - Australia – 876 gallons
 - Great Britain – 185 gallons
 - Switzerland – 77 gallons
- Restaurants in the U.S. serve nearly 70 million meals a day. Every glass of water brought to your table requires another two glasses of water to wash and rinse it.
- Taking an eight-minute shower saves up to 27 percent more water than taking a bath. In the summer, showers are more refreshing!
- You can save between 14 and 17 percent more water by doing only full loads in the dishwasher and washing machine.
- More than half of the residential water used in a typical Western city goes to outdoor landscape watering. Native plants, including grasses, generally require less water than other plants.
 - **Source:** *Pacific Northwest Region, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation*

- **The River Rangers Program.** This program reached more than 400 students during the 1999-2000 school year – more than twice as many students as the previous year. The program trains volunteers to teach elementary students how we use, treat, and protect water in our homes and communities.
- **Clark County/WSU Cooperative Extension Watershed Stewards Program.** This program trains volunteers in watershed and water quality protection. Four ten-week training sessions have been held since its inception in fall 1999.
- **Stormwater Assistance for Businesses.** This program provides Clark County businesses with technical assistance and information about the most effective ways to manage stormwater.
 - In November 2000, the Board of County Commissioners adopted a new *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Manual – Best Management Practices for Business and Government Agencies*. The manual provides area businesses with information on the most environmentally sound techniques for preventing stormwater pollution. Following

publication of the manual, businesses using best management practices increased from 25 percent to 52 percent.

- In 2000, county staff visited 165 businesses regarding stormwater issues in an effort to assist businesses with developing and implementing best management practices for their business. Prior to the inception of the Clean Water Program, county staff had visited just 18 businesses.

Clean Water Program staff have been actively coordinating educational efforts with school districts in Clark County and with Washington State University, Vancouver Campus, to broaden students' understanding and appreciation for water resources protection at the local level. Students at various schools are participating in field trips along creeks, attending Water Resources Education Center events, and coordinating their own science fair to learn about the area's environment and water issues.



This manual provides area businesses with information on the most environmentally sound techniques for preventing stormwater pollution.

Important note: The Burnt Bridge Creek Stormwater Utility has been incorporated into the Clean Water Program. Property owners no longer receive Burnt Bridge Creek utility bills.



Education and outreach provide the public with the tools they need to take individual positive steps toward improving water quality in our communities.

For more information

The Clark County Clean Water Commission:

Year 2000 Annual Report provides detailed information about activities that are funded by the clean water fee. The complete report and a summary of the report are available on the web site, www.co.clark.wa.us, or by calling (360)397-6118 ext. 4345. If you have other questions or comments, or if you would like additional information about the Clean Water Program, please call the Clark County Environmental Services Division at (360)397-6118 ext. 4352. You may also send e-mail to cleanwater@co.clark.wa.us or visit our web site at www.co.clark.wa.us.

